Edip Yuksel vs. Ali Sina Round 1 Part 2

Edip Yuksel vs. Ali Sina

Round I

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I went to your site and read your views on hadith

http://www.yuksel.org/e/religion/trash.htm

So you prefer to use the books of history to learn about Muhammad. That is fine with me. I will rely on history when I talk to you. However let us talk about hadith for now.

Your position is that all hadiths should be scrapped because a lot of them are fabricated. Lomax, your opponent in that debate, made a valid observation. He said: “The bound collection of testimony from any court is certain to contain some lies and some errors. The reliability of any piece of evidence remains debatable….And if a collector collects a thousand hadith and makes a few errors neither is he to be condemned as unreliable.”

You rebutted his statement and said: “Not a single court will accept the testimony of Bukhari who collected contradictory hadiths about the Prophet Muhammad, narrated from generation to generation 200 years after his departure.”

On this issue I side with Lomax. Let us make this clear with an example. The police department of a city is trying to solve a case and asks for tips from the public. Thousands of tips pour in. Most of them are completely unrelated, but among those thousands a few corroborate a story and based on those related tips the detectives will be able to solve the case. It would be unconscionable to through away all the tips because most of them are incorrect.

In our case we want to know about Muhammad and how he lived his life. We have tens of thousands of tips in the form of narrations of his followers. Many of them are weak leads and many of them are fabricated. We know also that the believers tend to exaggerate and aggrandize the virtues and attribute miracles to their beloved prophet. So when it comes to these particular hadiths we should take them with a grain of salt. However when we put all these tips together the picture of a man emerges. We separate those tips that corroborate each other and based on them we sketch the profile of our suspect. Can we be 100% sure that this is how he looked? Maybe not! But because these tips come from a variety of sources and despite the differences in detail they tell us the same story we can be fairly sure that we have a good idea of how our suspect looked and what he did.

So if I were a responsible detective, I would not discard all the tips simply because some of them are fabricated, especially when there is no other source to depend on. However, what if the picture emerging of the suspect portrays my beloved father? What would be my natural reaction? I would probably want to scrap all the tips and discredit them. This is dishonesty. But hey, you are talking about my father. You are asking me to choose between filial piety and honesty. That is a tough choice. Not everyone can pass that test. I would do everything to cover up my father's crime and protect him. That is how I see you and all other hadith deniers. You do not like what you see in the hadith. They embarrass you. You find Muhammad torturing his victims, beheading them, gauging their eyes, raping them and doing all sorts of despicable acts and all that hurts. So instead of being honest and admit that you were wrong and the man whom you worship is a psychopath criminal, you try to dismiss all the hadiths. You think if you put your head in the sand and pretend you do not see; the problem will go away. The despicable lawyers of O.J. Simpson did that and they won. But does that mean that Mr. Simpson is innocent? Even if you win this case based on discrediting the evidence and technicalities, can you still live with your conscience?

Can we use these hadiths in an actual court of law to incriminate Muhammad? I think we can. You may argue that they are circumstantial and try to discredit them. But they are so many that any sane jury will find it difficult to dismiss them. Muhammad is guilty as charged.

However, our goal is not to take legal action against Muhammad. He is dead. We want to find out the truth. We may never be able to find the truth one hundred percent. But we can get a fairly good idea of it. What you have now is absolute lie.

Nonetheless, we have enough evidence in the Quran, in the books of history and in the hadith to become certain that Muhammad was not a messenger of God but a cult leader like Jim Jones and David Koresh and this I will prove to you in our discussions.

Muslims have fallen in love with Muhammad because they have been shown a picture of him which portrays him as a holy man, a perfect human being, an example for all to follow, the mercy of God for all the creation, etc, etc. That image is false. According to our tips, and his own book, he was far from being a good man. How did the Muslims get that false picture in their minds? …Because they were fed with lies! It certainly does not match the picture we get from our tips and from our thorough investigation. So which picture is more accurate? The one that is based on the fantasies of his followers or the one that emerges from the tips?

This is just to show the weakness of the position of the Quran only Muslims. Apart from the fact that this is a fallacious way of thinking, it leaves Islam indecipherable.

I see in this letter you say that you don't even acknowledge the biography of Muhammad as recorded by Ibn Ishaq, Tabari and Waqidi. I understood this differently when I read your debate with Lomax but now it is clear.

If that is your position and you are adamant to deny all the historic evidences relating to Muhammad, I deny even the existence of Muhammad. I claim that he was the fabrication of

Arab rulers who needed a religion to justify their imperialistic ambitions (See Crone and Cook). You are a lawyer. You know that the burden of proof is on the person who is making the positive assertion, i.e. you. It is you who must prove that Muhammad actually existed and was not just a fictitious personage, a figment of the unknown real author/s of the Quran. Anything you say must be documented. However you can't use the hadith or the Sira to make your case. If you deny these books you can't use them.

> **Quote:**
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> I do not think that you are relying on every historical report of the syrah books, such as Tabari or Waqidi. I will treat each historical anecdote on ad-hoc basis and evaluate it critically with a healthy dose of suspicion.

So what is your position exactly? Are you saying that part of the history is acceptable? I perfectly understand looking at the history and hadith with a healthy dose of suspicion. That is my position too. The reason I bring this up is to know which documents are admissible in our discussion and which ones are not and whether your rejection of haidth and Sira is categorical or you are open to accept them with a healthy dose of suspicion. Are you willing to use the same criteria also for the hadith or hadith is definitely out?

I asked on what you base your knowledge of Muhammad and you responded:

> **Quote:**
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> I mostly rely on the narration of the Quran. If the Quran's account contradicts the account of a particular narration I chose the narrative of the Quran.

That is okay with me. If a hadith or a narration contradicts the Quran or the spirit of it we will reject it.

So let me recapitulate what I understood from your position. You would look at hadith and the biography of Muhammad, provided they do not contradict the Quran or the spirit of it. You are willing to consider them as sources of information for their historic value, although with some reservation.

If that is your position I am with you. That is how I look at those sources too. But if I have misunderstood you please correct me.

If that is the case, I will make my case against Muhammad using the hadith and Sira as well as the Qurn. You are of course free to dispute the accuracy of each document I present based on the above mentioned criteria. i.e. if they contradict the Quran, we will discard them but if they don't we keep them, not as absolute truth but as a probable.

In other words, we will not discard a hadith or a story just because it incriminates Muhammad. After all that is what I want to prove. If I am not even allowed to present my

evidence against him then what is the point of the trial?

I agree not to present any evidence that is against the explicit or implicit teachings of the Quran. You are entitled to question the validity of my exhibits but if you can’t demonstrate that they are unauthentic we are not going to discard them. We leave them there as probable. It is my conviction that the weight of these probable documents and that of the Quran will be so overwhelming that I will win the case against Muhammad and will prove to you and the world that he was an impostor and not a prophet. Scott Peterson's lawyer argued that all the evidences against his client are circumstantial. He was right! But they were so many that the jury had no problem convicting him. We have a lot more evidence against Muhammad.